

Correspondence.

SWISS COTTAGE.

SIR.—I find in page 471 of *THE BUILDER*, a design for a Swiss Cottage with a high-pitched concave roof. This struck me as being quite inconsistent with

"Aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history"

of the Swiss style. On turning to page 59, vol. v. of the *Architectural Magazine*, in an article on the poetry of architecture, by Kata Pham, it is stated, in speaking of Swiss cottages, that "the principal requisite is, of course, strength; and this is always observable in the large size of the timbers, and the ingenious manner in which they are joined, so as to support and relieve each other, when any of them are severely tried. The roof is always very flat, generally meeting at an angle of 155°, and projecting from 5 feet to 7 feet over the cottage side, in order to prevent the windows from being thoroughly clogged up with snow. This projection must not be crushed down by the enormous weight of snow which it must sometimes sustain, it is assisted by strong wooden supports which sometimes extend half down the walls for the sake of strength, divide the side into regular compartments, and are rendered ornamental by grotesque carving. Every canton has its own window. That of Uri, with its diamond work at the bottom is the richest. The galleries are generally rendered ornamental by a great deal of labour bestowed upon their wood-work. This is best executed in the canton of Berne. The door is always 6 or 7 feet from the ground, and occasionally much more, that may be accessible in snow, and is reached by an oblique gallery leading up to a horizontal one. The base of the cottage is formed of stone generally white-washed." The design furnished by "P. T." does not appear to me to agree at all with these particulars, and as I have never had an opportunity of observing Swiss cottages in Switzerland, I am unable to say whether "P. T." is correct in his design, or Kata Pham in his description; perhaps some of your readers will be kind enough to inform me. I should, however, be inclined to say that the design with its light supports and tent-like roof approaches much nearer to the Chinese style than that of the Swiss.

I am, Sir, your well-wisher,
Loomington, Nov. 22, 1843. NORMAN.

WORKING OF A SKEW ARCH.

SIR.—Wishing thoroughly to understand the skew arch given in No. 41 of your excellent periodical, will you permit me to put a few questions to "G. S." upon the subject? Of what use is the section I from a to c on arch development?

Would not a section on the same line on the cylinder development be the true curve of the rules for the soffit?

Of what use is the twisted rule, and in what manner is it found from the twist of beds marked M? Hoping "G. S." will not overlook my inquiries. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
A SUBSCRIBER.

NEW ROYAL EXCHANGE.

SIR.—In the *Morning Herald* of the 21st inst. was the second of a series of letters on metropolitan architecture, and which principally had relation to the New Royal Exchange. With the general remarks of the writer on that subject I fully concur; but I am somewhat surprised that he has passed over in silence the very unsightly appearance of the stone, which, like Joseph's coat, is already "of many colours," and not, like the drab-coloured men of Pennsylvania, of one. The exterior would look much better than it does, if it were covered over with coating of paint or stucco; as it is, I only know of one remedy for the evil, and that is—patience. In the course of fifty years, the defects of which I complain will be no longer visible, for by that time the whole edifice will be clad in deep mourning for the sin of its founders. I know not how to account for this disgraceful fact—nor is it my business to do so—except upon the supposition that the contract was made for stone of an inferior quality, on account of cheapness, instead of the best that could be obtained, and such as would have been an ornament, not a discredit, to the city. It is not impossible that there may have been a jobbing in the affair. *Nous errons*.
November, 1843. SECTATOR.

P. S.—Now that I have the pen in my hand, I may observe that there is a new stone just come, or about to come, I hardly know which. Into the market, called the Orley Chevin stone, from a quarry near Leeds. From samples and certificates I have seen, this stone would appear to be unsurpassed either in beauty, durability, or resistance to atmospheric influences. But my object is simply to call the attention of your practical readers to it, as,

I believe, it is at present not much known, and not to write a panegyric upon it.

BUILDERS' SOCIETY.

SIR.—It has struck me several times of late that a Builders' Society should and might be formed, and which would produce the most beneficial results to all who are concerned in that business, by means of a proper understanding and regulated rules, and to take some determined step to check the increasing rage of competition now existing to such an alarming extent, and which, if not soon restrained, must produce the most disastrous results. It is positively certain, and no one who is well acquainted with building affairs can deny, that contracts at the present time are frequently taken considerably below the cost price. Now, such a system as this is not only ruinous to the master builder; he is not a sufferer alone; the mechanic becomes a sufferer, and the merchant who supplies the material becomes one also. The reasons I assign for this wide-spread evil are, for instance, an individual commences business, he has no private trade, and in the false hopes of thereby gaining one, resorts to this desperate measure. Another, either from losses in trade or by previous low contracts, follows in the same steps, with an idea, through some false circumstance, he may possibly escape the ruin hanging over him. Now, upon the least reflection, it is certain the honest tradesman, whose desire is not to oppress those in his employ by low wages or other unfair means now so much resorted to, and who intends his creditors shall not be losers by the goods they supply, cannot compete with such individuals. It is a hard case, and one that ought to engage the attention of the rulers of our land, and cause them to make such protection laws as would prevent him whose desire is to be just being a sufferer through another who looks at justice as folly. But the poor but honest tradesman must sink, and he who is a man of property must see that property diminish while things continue in their present state.

Should this prove acceptable to be inserted in your publication, the same would oblige, and in such a case I shall give you a true statement of the position in which builders stand as regards architecture, and to what tyranny they are subject through the means of competition, and the arbitrary clauses inflicted in specification, for its protection.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
A COMPETING BUILDER.

November 27, 1843.

P. S.—I may talk myself, and another may also do the same upon this great evil, but there the matter sinks; not so when made public by the press. It is then that things become universally known; for instance, the late affair at Worthing, made known through your publication, has no doubt caused more excitement than any thing yet put within its pages. It is these things that will arouse the trade, and bring them to see the folly of persisting in that which must prove their ruin.

SIR.—I am, and have been from its commencement, a regular subscriber to your paper, *THE BUILDER*. I have been much pleased to see it gradually improving since the early numbers were issued, and now take a great interest in the publication. Will you, therefore, permit me to utter my angry protest against your inserting in future such articles as I feel must prove manifestly injurious to the work, and are, to say the least of them, an outrage on the patience of your readers. Your well-meant anxiety to encourage humble merit, &c., is, doubtless, very commendable; but, Sir, I am far from thinking with you that the columns of a public magazine are a proper field for such people as "A Practical Builder," or "Mr. Pollard, of New York," to try their weapons in. What information can your readers possibly acquire by inspecting such plans for miserable, windowless "dwelling-houses," as those contributed by the former of these gentlemen in your last number? Nay, what actual bad taste will they not acquire by looking at such things as the "Washington Memorial," and reading its author's wretched details of "Gothic friends," "Gothic" "balustrades," "galvanised cast-iron portagen pinnacles, 194 feet high," and "rotundas" wherein, forthwith, aspiring students are to cultivate the "fine arts" up heaven-knows-how-many-pairs-of stairs? Of this design you say in your leading article, "What does it matter to us that this is the work of another nation and people?" For my own part, Sir, having been pretty considerably "galvanised" by Mr. Pollard's production, "425 feet high," I cannot but replying it matters immensely. I look at it, and bless my stars that it is "the work of another nation and people," and not a *clash-Atlantic* monotony; indeed, in the high tide of national prejudice condescended by Mr. P.'s design, I am tempted to question whether even your other correspondent, the so-called "Practical Builder" could (as he an Englishman) have perpetrated such an arrogant architectural caricature. It is worse than his

"dwelling-houses," or "A. B. J.'s" "Design for a Church in the Classical Style," which you inserted some two months ago.

As, of course, you do not hold yourself responsible for, and freely offer your columns for critiques on, the several productions of your correspondents, pray insert this letter. Many of these gentlemen are evidently highly talented men; and I am jealous of such things as I have adverted to passing muster in such a paper as *THE BUILDER* is becoming.

GUILLOTINE LE JEUNE.

London, November 25, 1843.

[If we had done no more by the insertion of the "Washington Testimonial," and the dwelling-house plans, and the "Design for a Church in the Classical Style," than call forth the remarks and criticisms of our correspondent as above, together with the many other remarks, exceptible and approving, our object would have been answered. Bad designs and bad criticisms rank together, and it is to excite or to provoke to reasoning that we now and then insert them. We have also given a long letter of Mr. Charles Newtham's, denoting thus an extreme step to correspondence for this week, and our comments in the leader, because we would reiterate our particular views and opinions in anticipation of the commencement of a new year, when we hope to be well understood, and to have our purpose heartily approved of by a large circle of esteemed friends who may thenforth accompany us in our career.—Ed.]

MEASURING AND VALUING.

SIR.—In Striving's and other price books there is a column for the price of joiner's work headed "All Materials," and this, in the explanation given, is said to be the whole charge for the work. Now as I have met with contrary opinions, I should feel obliged if you will be kind enough to state whether these prices are intended to include the fitting of partitions, flairs, &c., and the hanging of doors and sashes; that is to say, measuring the work when the house is complete, and taking all mouldings, soffits, architraves, &c., as they then stand, at the book-price? or does it mean, the "whole charge" for all these fittings as they are sent from the bench only, leaving the labour of fitting either to be charged or estimated according to circumstances?

I have known these price books made use of in both ways, and it is calculated to produce great discrepancy in builders' accounts.

I am, Sir, your very obedient humble servant,
November 25, 1843. A FOREMAN.

[Under the head of "All Materials" is included the price for fixing the article; for instance, in a door, the labour of fitting and hanging is included, the hinges and screws to be charged extra; the fixing of the lock, latch, or other fastening to be charged at so much per piece. It is a practice in many places to measure one edge of a door to allow for the fitting, and one edge of shutters, giving the rebate; the hinges and screws to be charged extra, but the labour of hanging is included in the price per foot. Shutter-bars, hinges, latches, &c., to be charged extra, and for fitting, the same as in door fastenings. In sashes and frames, the price includes fixing, fitting, hanging, pulleys, cords, and weights, when specified; but not sash fasteners, nor putting on.—Ed.]

KING'S CALORIFIC SMOKE CONDUCTOR.

A "Subscriber to *THE BUILDER*" would feel obliged by the information, where the free-gases shown and described in page 59, March 11, of that journal, by S. King, of Bath, can be seen and purchased in London.

November 22, 1843.

MEASURING BRICK-WORK.

SIR.—Will you please inform me through your widely-circulated paper the method generally used for reducing cubic feet to standard, as I find there are different ways of doing it: some multiply by 6 and divide by 7, which must be in the strict letter correct; and others multiply by 8 and divide by 9; if the latter, perhaps you can state why such an allowance is made—about 10 feet per rod?

C. H. C.

[The practice of multiplying by 6 and dividing by 7, we should say is erroneous, but proceeds on the assumption that a brick-and-half wall is 14 inches thick, 6 and 7 being in the same ratio as 12, the inches in a foot, to 14, the assumed number of inches in a brick-and-half wall. We prefer, and think the other method the only just one, there being eight